3: Comm--27 F-5 (ca.1837) 1966 SRS Bush Negroes SRS

/24 cont./

Chapter XVI

Manner of Traveling, and so forth

484 Their manner of traveling is very simple. Usually wife and children accompany them; very rarely do they go alone. They never take along more food provisions than they consider to be strictly necessary, in order not to have any burden of great baggage, for which their small, narrow vessels made out of a tree trunk are in any case little suited.

484 411 As primitive people they are able to withstand deprivations very well, but nonetheless they always take care to be armed when they go traveling. These hunting and war weapons consist of gun, powder, lead, bow and arrows, as well as a machete and an ax.

484 505 [501] [372] Frequently they can continue on these journeys in a small, narrow corjaal (canoe) for weeks on end; there is, of course, a great lack of comforts, but they are contented so long as they merely have a little place in the corjaal where they can maintain a flaming fire, which serves for the preparation of foods and because the Negro generally finds in it a, for him, pleasant sociability. Their journeys are not of great significance; they never extend across the sea, which is the case among the various Indian tribes.

/25/

Chapter XVII

Manner of Waging War, Ceremonies in connection with Concluding Peace and Alliance

721 War is rarely waged by or among them, but when it does take place, their conflict bears the character of a thirst for revenge, treachery, and hatred.

728 [273] At the conclusion of peace, the subject party pledges itself to satisfy the demands of the victors, provided these are mutually judged as fair. As part of the ceremonies observed on this occasion there is also a large consumption of dram.

/29 cont./

439 Thus it is known to me that they have gone to one or
501 another plantation in order to sell timber, which they tie to their
505 korjalen or canoes after having made it into rafts with bush ropes
[283] (tough liana stalks), and have misled the Europeans in a scandalous
manner.

[284] They make their squared timber into rafts in the follow-
ing manner. Four thick strong round timbers are laid crosswise
and tied together, two above and two under the korjaal; the timber
is pushed in between these and fastened, so that the whole thing
forms a firm long rectangle with the korjaal in the middle /30/
with which they make long journeys from the upper to the lower
[285] rivers. This timber that is made into rafts and carried along by
the korjaal is called kokroko; they tie light and floating wood to
long beams with bush rope (called boemmetí) (1), that tied to the

1. From the copaiva.

heavy wood they drag it along down the river.

Chapter XXI

Understanding among Themselves

114 Not long ago I found myself among them on the river
133 Upper Commewijne on the Tempati (a branch of the river named,
on the left going upstream; this branch runs into the mountains,
which are reported as ruddle mountains /roodenberg/.

114 Residing among them, I made many attempts to induce
648 them to track down those in hiding who did not belong to their
tribes and fugitives of a later time, and to make known to them
that by governmental decree in the course of the year 1863, before
the emancipation, a general amnesty regarding them had been
issued, so that they could return to their former dwelling places
without fear of punishment. The reason that induced me to
acquaint them with this was that I saw in the return of these persons

/B cont./ The Pirogues of the Refugee Blacks, carrying a useful load of from 1,000 to 2,000 kilograms, are the normal means for provisioning the placers and European settlements of the interior. The use of outboard motors on these small boats tends to become more general, but navigation remains difficult and dangerous and the Refugee Blacks continue to draw the essential part of their resources from these trips. /Fig. 1 appears here./

/B/ Populations

The Maroni Basin is relatively populated if it is compared with the rest of Guiana. The population includes three human groups which are very different from one another and have absolutely no tendency to merge although they maintain friendly relations.

1) Creoles. This is the name of the colored persons who lead a life with individual characteristics and have adopted European forms of life in part,. by contrast to the Refugee Blacks who live in tribes under the command of chiefs. African blood is dominant in the Creoles, especially among the gold miners.

In 1958 there were no more than about 800 Maroni Creoles, almost all gold miners or traders, grouped principally around the little Surinam mining center of Benzdorp; very small villages of gold miners are scattered along the principal tributaries of the Maroni, notably the Abouanami, the Great and the Little Inini, the Waki.

The Maroni Creoles are nearly all foreigners, the great majority originally from the British West Indies, more specifically from Santa Lucia and Barbados; there are very few among them from the French West Indies or the Guianas.

All speak dialects with a French base, very close to one another but rather different from the very special patois of the

/Cont. cont./

648 which in Black Africa has so powerfully contributed toward the destruction of traditional structures.

[829] Truth to tell, the problem was simpler, for the conceptions of the Refugee Blacks, involving no form of oppression of individuals and assuming the right of the woman to self-determination, reduce to the vanishing point the sources of disputes between individuals and groups.

[162] In 1946 the administrative post of Maripasoula was created, near the confluence of the Lawa and the Inini. Since that time, the gendarmerie has administered to the satisfaction of all and without any incident a heterogeneous population of 2,000 persons, gold miners, Refugee Blacks, and Indians, scattered over a vast territory. The medical post created at Maripasoula in 1949 is very much frequented by the Boni and performs an extremely useful function on the psychological as well as on the social level.

[793] The relations of the various groups give rise to very small frictions, one with another, but the Refugee Blacks never give occasion for intervention in the internal affairs of their groups. Respectful of the administration, they carry out punctually their commitments to their employers, insuring all the transport on the river according to a modus vivendi established for a long time (1).

[505]

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On this subject it is to be noted that disagreeable incidents occur each time the Boni deal with inexperienced travelers who do not know the customs of the river or do not wish to apply them. In a general way the Refugee Blacks, of their own accord respectful of anyone who comes to do a useful job, loathe tourists; they cannot stand being photographed or observed like queer animals.